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(84) Process for heat treatment of aqueous solution containing human blood coagulation factor XIII.

(87) A process for heat treatment of an aqueous solution containing human blood coagulation factor XIII is described which is characterized in that the heat treatment is carried out at 50° to 80°C for 3 to 15 hours in the presence of 10% (W/V) or more of at least one principal stabilizer selected from the group consisting of neutral amino acids, monosaccharides and sugar alcohols and 10% (W/V) or more of at least one auxiliary stabilizer selected from the group consisting of salts or organic carboxylic acids having 3 to 10 carbon atoms.

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PROCESS FOR HEAT TREATMENT OF AQUEOUS SOLUTION CONTAINING
HUMAN BLOOD COAGULATION FACTOR XIII

This invention relates to a process of heat treatment to inactivate the hepatitis virus in an aqueous solution containing the human blood coagulation factor XIII.

The blood coagulation factor XIII (hereinafter referred to briefly as factor XIII) participates in the formation of a stable fibrin polymer in the final stage of blood coagulation mechanism, and is also called fibrin stabilizing factor. Under normal conditions it exists in an inactive form in the blood. However, in the event of formation of thrombin upon coagulation of blood after hemorrhage or the like, the factor XIII becomes activated by the action of thrombin and calcium ion and strives for the stabilization of fibrin. Therefore, in a blood suffering from diminution or deficiency of the factor XIII, although the coagulation time shows a normal threshold, the formed fibrin clot is fragile, giving rise to characteristic phenomena such as secondary hemorrhage and the like.

The clinical applications of the factor XIII preparations include not only treatment for disorders due to congenital or acquired deficiency or diminution in factor XIII but also promotion of wound healing after surgical operations in a broad range.

In recent years, however, the onset of serum

1 hepatitis accompanied with transfusion has become one of
the serious social problems and the cause was found to be
attributable to the hepatitis virus. The individual
preparation of serum proteins separated by the fractiona-
5 tion of blood plasma also involves the problem of onset
of hepatitis.

The factor XIII, which is the subject of this
invention, is also one of the human serum protein
preparations and is likewise apprehensive of the contami-
10 nation with hepatitis virus.

In order to solve the problem of hepatitis
infection, it was found that the infective activity of
hepatitis virus in serum protein preparations in
general, particularly in albumin preparations, may be
15 controlled by the heat treatment at 60°C for 10 hours
without causing the denaturation of albumin. Since
the albumin preparation subjected to such a heat treat-
ment has been clinically used with safety, the method
of inactivating the hepatitis virus by the heat treat-
20 ment at 60°C for 10 hours is now being adapted to other
human serum protein preparations. However, in order to
apply such a heat treatment, the substance being treated
must be stable to the treatment.

When the factor XIII was heated in an aqueous
25 solution at 60°C for 10 hours, its activity was found
to be markedly deteriorated. The present inventors
previously succeeded in markedly improving the stability
of an aqueous solution containing the factor XIII against

- 1 the heat treatment at 60°C for 10 hours by adding a
neutral amino acid, a sugar alcohol and a monosaccharide
each in a concentration of 10% or more, thus making
possible the inactivation treatment of hepatitis virus
5 in a medicinal preparation [Japanese Patent Application
"Kokai" (Laid-open) No. 59,018/1978].

The present inventors subsequently found that
in the above method of heat stabilization, the heat
stability of factor XIII could be further improved by
10 the supplementary addition of a specific organic
carboxylic acid salt. The present invention has been
accomplished on the basis of said finding.

An object of this invention is to provide a
novel heat treatment process in which the inactivation
15 treatment of hepatitis virus in an aqueous solution
containing the human blood coagulation factor XIII is
carried out under those conditions which increase the
thermal stability of said factor.

Other objects and advantages of this invention
20 will become apparent from the following description.

According to this invention there is provided
a process for heat treatment, characterized in that the
heat treatment at 50° to 80°C of an aqueous solution
containing the human blood coagulation factor XIII is
25 carried out for 3 to 15 hours in the presence of 10 to 30%
(W/V) of a principal stabilizer selected from the group
consisting of neutral amino acids, monosaccharides and
sugar alcohols and 10 to 30% (W/V) of an auxiliary

- 1 stabilizer selected from the group consisting of salts of
organic carboxylic acids having 3 to 10 carbon atoms.

The factor XIII being heat treated is subject
to no particular limitation, so far as it is originated
5 from man. It is contained in blood plasma, platelet
and placenta in comparatively large quantities and
methods for its recovery from respective materials have
been known [Loewy, A.G., Journal of Biological Chemistry,
236, 2625 (1961); Januszeko, B.T., Nature, 191, 1093
10 (1961); Bohn, V.H., Blut, 25, 235 (1972)]. Of these
materials, because of their high prices, blood plasma
and platelet are unsuitable for the large-scale production
of factor XIII. Conversely, the placenta contains a
comparatively large quantity of factor XIII and is
15 easily available. Therefore, the recovery from the
placenta is attracting most attention at present.

Preparation of the factor XIII from the
placenta can be carried out by several methods such as
a method for purifying the factor XIII by a combined
20 procedure involving gel filtration and fractionations
using ammonium sulfate, 2-ethoxy-6,9-diaminoacridine
lactate (acrinol) and alcohol [Blut, 25, 235 (1972)];
a method utilizing principally the ammonium sulfate
fractionation technique (Japanese Patent Application
25 "Kokai" (Laid-open) No. 59,018/1978), and a fractiona-
tion method employing an alkylene oxide polymer
(Japanese Patent Application "Kokai" (Laid-open)
No. 64,522/1980, European Patent Application No.

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- 1 79104346.6). Although the degree of purification of factor XIII is not specifically restricted, it is desirable to use an aqueous solution of factor XIII having an activity of 5 to 500 units/ml, as assayed
- 5 by the method described in Thrombosis, Diathesis Haemorrhagica, 23, 455 (1970). The factor XIII content of the aqueous solution to be heat-treated is preferably 0.1 to 10% (W/V) in terms of protein and the pH of the solution is generally 5 to 10, preferably 6.5 to 8.5
- 10 and adjusted most preferably with a suitable buffer solution of a low salt concentration.

- The neutral amino acids, monosaccharides and sugar alcohols for use as principal stabilizers are described in detail in Japanese Patent Application
- 15 "Kokai" (Laid-open) No. 59,018/1978. Nonlimitative examples include neutral amino acids such as glycine and alanine, monosaccharides such as glucose, xylose, and fructose, and sugar alcohols such as mannitol, galactitol, glucosaminitol, sorbitol, and galactosaminitol.
- 20 They may be used each alone or in combinations. The amount to be added of principal stabilizers is generally 10% (W/V) or more, preferably 10 to 30% (W/V) in practice. If present in an amount less than 10% (W/V), the principal stabilizers will exhibit only unsatisfactory stabilizing
- 25 effect.

The organic carboxylic acid having 3 to 10
is
carbon atoms used in the form of a salt as the auxiliary stabilizer according to this invention is a hydrocarbon

- 1 moiety combined with a carboxyl group. The hydrocarbon
moiety may be saturated or unsaturated. Examples of
such hydrocarbon moieties include alkyl groups, aryl
groups (e.g. phenyl group) and aralkyl groups. The
5 number of carboxyl group may be singular or plural,
preferably one or two. The carboxylic acid may contain
a hydroxyl group as substituent. Although the salt
of said organic carboxylic acid to be used in the present
process may be any so far as it is physiologically
10 acceptable, alkali metal salts (e.g. sodium salt and
potassium salt) and alkaline earth metal salts (e.g.
calcium salt) are preferred and sodium salt and potassium
salt are most preferred.

- Examples of suitable organic carboxylic acid
15 salts include physiologically acceptable salts, pre-
ferably alkali metal salts (sodium salts and potassium
salts) of propanoic acid, butanoic acid, pentanoic acid,
caprylic acid, caproic acid, malonic acid, succinic
acid, glutaric acid, adipic acid, citric acid and
20 mandelic acid. These salts are used each alone or in
combinations. The amount to be added of an organic
carboxylic acid salt is 10% (W/V) or more, preferably
10 to 30% (W/V) in practice. If the amount is below
10% (W/V), the effectiveness as an auxiliary stabilizer
25 will be unsatisfactory.

The temperature of heat treatment is 50° to
80°C, preferably 60°C and the time of heating is 3 to
15 hours, preferably 10 hours.

1 After the heat treatment according to this
invention, the aqueous solution containing the factor
XIII shows an electric conductivity two to five times
as high as that of untreated solution. Consequently,
5 before purification, the heat-treated aqueous solution
is dialyzed, diluted, or centrifuged to separate the
factor XIII as a precipitate. Then the purification
may be performed in known ways. If the recovered factor
XIII has a sufficiently high purity, it is made into
10 medicinal preparations by customary pharmaceutical
procedures such as sterile filtration, dispensation and
lyophilization.

In the case of crude factor XIII, it is purified by a combination of known purification procedures
15 for factor XIII, such as chromatography with an anion
exchanger, treatment with a molecular sieve, and
fractionation by use of PEG, acrinol or the like.

In order to examine the effectiveness of the
heat treatment of this invention, a preparation of
20 human factor XIII which has been recovered from a
HBsAg (hepatitis virus antigen)-positive blood plasma
was heat-treated at 60°C for 10 hours under the conditions as herein specified. A portion of the preparation
corresponding to a factor XIII activity of 500 units
25 (as assayed by the method previously described) was
inoculated into a chimpanzee to observe the onset of
hepatitis. After one month, no sign of hepatitis was
observed.

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1 As described above, the heat treatment process
of this invention is capable of perfectly inactivating
the infectivity of hepatitis virus which is liable
to contaminate the factor XIII preparation, a precious
5 blood preparation, thereby causing no loss in factor
XIII activity. The heat treatment according to this
invention, therefore, has a remarkable advantage in the
commercial production of factor XIII preparations
involving a virus inactivation step.

10 The invention is illustrated below with
reference to Example but the invention is not limited
thereto.

Example

To one liter of an aqueous solution containing
15 100 units (activity)/ml of factor XIII dissolved in a
0.05 M phosphate buffer solution (pH 7.0), were added
150 g of glycine and 150 g of trisodium citrate. After
thorough stirring, the mixture was heated at 60°C for
10 hours. After cooling, the mixture was centrifuged
20 to separate a precipitate which was again dissolved in
the 0.05 M phosphate buffer solution (pH 7.0). The
resulting solution was dialyzed against a 0.05 M
phosphate buffer solution (pH 7.2) containing 0.005 M
EDTA to obtain a clear solution. To this solution was
25 added 500 g (wet weight) of QAE-Sephadex, which had been
equilibrated with the same buffer solution as used above,
to adsorb thereon the factor XIII. The effluent fractions

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1 obtained by elution with a 0.5 M sodium chloride solution
were combined and dialyzed against a 0.5% sodium chloride
solution containing 2.25% of glycine. The dialyzed
solution was sterile-filtered, dispensed and lyophilized.

5 Experimental Example

A series of experiments were conducted to
evaluate the stabilizing effect of various additives on
the heat treatment. In the experiment one liter of an
aqueous solution containing 500 units (activity)/ml of
10 factor XIII was used. After addition of various
additives in varied amounts as shown in Table 1, the
solution was treated at 60°C for 10 hours. The retention
(%) of total activity based on the activity of untreated
solution in each case was as shown in Table 1. From the
15 results it is seen that each principal stabilizer
exhibits an increased stabilizing effect in the presence
of an auxiliary stabilizer.

Table 1

Principal stabilizer	% (W/V)	Auxiliary stabilizer	% (W/V)	Retention of activity (%)					
Glycine	15	Trisodium citrate	0	50					
			10	85					
			15	90					
			20	90					
	25	Sodium caprylate	0	50					
			10	86					
			15	92					
			20	92					
Alanine	25	Sodium citrate	0 10 20	25 65 69					
Mannitol	15	Sodium mandelate	0 10 15 20	50 81 91 90					
			25	Sodium caproate	0 10 15 20	50 82 90 91			
					15	Sodium caprylate	0 10 15 20	50 89 91 90	
							25	Sodium caprylate	0 10 15 20
	Glucose	15							Disodium glutarate
			25	Disodium malonate					
					None				

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A process for heat treatment of an aqueous solution containing human blood coagulation factor XIII, which comprises carrying out the heat treatment at 50° to 80°C of an aqueous solution containing the human blood coagulation factor XIII for 3 to 15 hours in the presence of 10% (W/V) or more of at least one principal stabilizer selected from the group consisting of neutral amino acids, mono-saccharides and sugar alcohols and 10% (W/V) or more of at least one auxiliary stabilizer selected from the group consisting of salts of organic carboxylic acids having 3 to 10 carbon atoms.
2. A process according to Claim 1, wherein the salts of organic carboxylic acids are physiologically acceptable salts of propanoic acid, butanoic acid, pentanoic acid, caprylic acid, caproic acid, malonic acid, succinic acid, glutaric acid, adipic acids, citric acid and mandelic acid.
3. A process according to Claim 2, wherein the physiologically acceptable salt is a sodium or a potassium salt.
4. A process according to Claim 1, wherein the neutral amino acid is glycine or alanine.
5. A process according to Claim 1, wherein the monosaccharide is glucose, xylose or fructose.
6. A process according to Claim 1, wherein the sugar alcohol is mannitol, galactitol, glucosaminitol, sorbitol or galactosaminitol.
7. A process according to Claim 1, wherein the

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principal stabilizer and the auxiliary stabilizer are present in amounts of 10 to 30% (W/V) and 10 to 30% (W/V), respectively.